The Birds of Forest, Oneida and Vilas Counties, Wisconsin

By Phillip V. Vanderschaegen

Introduction
This paper is the result of an effort to gather published reports and field observations of birds in Forest, Oneida and Vilas Counties. This information is presented for the use of interested ornithologists, amateur and professional, for those interest in bird distribution in Wisconsin, and as an aid for those interested in environment impacts. Hopefully, this paper will encourage more field observations in this part of the State to help fill the gaps in our knowledge.

It is not the intent of this paper to be the definite word on the birds of this area. Avian status and distribution is constantly changing, from extreme examples such as extinction (Passenger Pigeon) and introduction (European Starling), to gradual declines (Eastern Bluebird) or increases (Evening Grosbeak). Bird populations should be continually monitored as birds are excellent indicators of environmental changes. There are also many species found in this area whose status is unknown.

Geology
The study area lies on the southern part of the Canadian Shield. Bedrock is comprised of precambrian igneous and metamorphic rocks. Bedrock outcrops are uncommon. The surface geology is dominated by glacial landforms. The major area of all three counties consists of pitted outwash, the result of deposition of rocks and soil by glacial meltwater. End moraines are found in southwest Forest County, northern Vilas County, and the Enterprise area in Oneida County.

Soils
Sandy loams and loamy sands are the predominant soils in the three counties. Loamy sands and sands are found mainly in central Vilas and the western half of Oneida County. Silt loam is found in northeast Forest County and the Enterprise area of Oneida County. Extensive peat and acid sedge peat areas occur throughout the area and dominate Powell and Thunder Marsh areas (Geological and Natural History Survey 1968).

Topography
The topography of the study area tends to be level to gently rolling. Topographical relief is provided by ground and terminal moraines, eskers, kettles and one monadnock, McCaslin Mountain in southeast Forest County. Sandy outwash plains can be found in each county and are especially well developed in Vilas County. Sugar Bush Hill, between Crandon and Laona, is the highest point in the three counties (1,850 feet).

Lakes and Streams
The legacy of the last ice age is strongly felt in Forest, Oneida and Vilas Counties. The abundance of lakes is one of the outstanding features of this area and contributes to its demand as a recreational area. The number of lakes and ponds is staggering; Forest County has 824, Oneida County has 1,129, and Vilas County has 1,326 (DNR files).

The study area is at the headwaters of three drainage systems with water flowing to the Mississippi River, Lake Michigan and Lake Superior. The
Peshtigo, Pine, Popple, Wisconsin, and Wolf Rivers all start within these three counties.

**Climate**

The climate of the study area is continental and is largely determined by the movement of large air masses. Winters are usually long and cold, while summers are warm and pleasant. There is considerable temperature fluctuation from season to season and from year to year. Weather changes can be expected every few days in winter and spring. Spring and fall are often short with rapid transition from winter to summer and from summer to winter. The ground is usually snow covered from mid-November to the end of March. Average yearly precipitation is 30.77 inches and average snowfall is 55.6 inches. The average daily temperature is 41.6° F. This weather information was gathered at Rhinelander (Burley 1961).

**Vegetation**

The majority of the land in the study area is forested. In 1968, 85 percent of Forest and Oneida Counties was forest land and 80 percent of Vilas County was forested (DNR No Date). Cropland made up less than three percent of the land in 1968.

The plant communities which occur in the study area are discussed in detail in Curtis (1959). Upland forests include vast acreages of northern hardwood (largely maple) and aspen types. Pine types are scattered throughout the three counties and are most common in Vilas County.

Lowland sites are dominated by forests composed of Black Spruce, Balsam Fir, White Cedar, Tamarack, Ash and Red Maple. The predominant type is Black Spruce forest.

Nonforested areas include open bog, lesser acreages of alder, willow, sedge meadow and emergent aquatics. Areas associated with human developments form a small part of the area and include towns, highways, gravel pits and various rights-of-way.

**Influence of Man**

Much of the study area is undeveloped, especially northern Forest County. Major public forests, including the Nicolet National Forest, Northern Highland/American Legion State Forest and County Forests, have been set aside in the area. Large blocks of industrial forests are located in Oneida and Forest Counties.

Major population centers in the area include Rhinelander, Eagle River, Crandon, and the Minocqua-Woodruff (Lakeland) area. Extensive lakeshore development has occurred throughout the lake region and includes seasonal cabins, permanent homes, and resorts. Vilas and Oneida Counties have the fastest human population growth rate in the State.

Farming activities are localized in Forest County, largely in the Crandon and Armstrong Creek areas. In Oneida County, farms are found mainly in the Starks area and scattered around Rhinelander.

**Methods**

I have been observing the birds of these three counties since November 1972. Most of my effort was spent in Oneida County, followed by Forest, with much reduced field time spent in Vilas County. My own observations are not systematic but usually were made in conjunction with work and recreational activities. I also conducted censuses of State Scientific areas
and breeding bird surveys. Special effort was made to locate birds during the spring and summer with fewer observations in fall and winter.

I also searched the "Field Notes" section of the Passenger Pigeon issues since 1960. Special attention was directed at reports of less common species. Other literature was used in a nonsystematic way.

Four Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS) are located within the three counties. A fifth survey lies mainly in Forest County but runs into Florence County. The results of these surveys were obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Laurel, Maryland. BBS results were used as indicators of relative abundance for those species that I felt were adequately sampled by this technique. Also, several species were found on this survey that were not previously known to me to occur here.

**General Description of the Avifauna**

I have been able to document 244 species of birds in the three counties. Of these, about 27 (11%) are permanent residents, 158 (66%) are summer residents, and 45 (19%) are regular migrants through the area. About 30 are rare to uncommon species which do not occur here regularly.

Forest dwelling species dominate the avifauna of this area and the boreal forest influence is strongly felt. Erskine (1977:20) lists 27 species in boreal Canadian spruce stands, of these 22 are known to breed in this area. Many boreal species such as Spruce Grouse, Boreal Chickadee, Gray Jay, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Swainson's Thrush, Magnolia Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler and Cape May Warbler are at or near the southern edge of their range in this area.

Few species of birds are at the northern edge of their range in this area; exceptions are Least Bittern, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Dickcissel and Cardinal. All of these species I would consider rare here and are very likely outside their normal range. Distributions of more southern birds typically end in central Wisconsin near the "tension zone" (Curtis 1959).

The study area lies within the mixed hardwood-coniferous forest zone discussed by Temple, et al. (1979). Characteristics of the avian communities of these forests include: 1) a rich species diversity of summer birds and a low diversity in winter, and 2) a greater abundance of species than other major habitat types in North America.

The abundance of lakes in this three-county area contributes significantly to the avian diversity and abundance. Duck use on lakes is generally lower than southern more fertile lakes. However, six species of ducks commonly breed here. The influence of lakes is much greater for fish eating birds, Common Loon, Bald Eagle and Osprey. These three species are found here much more commonly than other areas of the state with the possible exception of the lake region in northwest Wisconsin.

Seventeen species of birds were found at an average of 10 or more stops on the five Breeding Bird Surveys. These are listed in Table 1. These birds are probably the most common breeding birds in this area.

Table 2 lists various families of birds and their relative abundance as sampled on BBS's. It is interesting to note that the birds found on these surveys are the same as those I have documented in this area with only one exception. Yellow-headed blackbirds, a species which to the best of my knowledge is only found in two places in this area, were not found on the BBS's.
Table 1. Birds recorded on an average of 10 or more stops on BBS’s in Forest, Oneida, and Vilas Counties:

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<tr>
<th>Species</th>
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Acknowledgements

The following persons provided data and assisted with the preparation of the annotated list: James E. Baughman, Rev. S.D. Robbins, R.G. Eckstein, and the late Dr. Lois Almon. Dan Boone, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Migratory Bird and Habitat Research Laboratory provided copies of Breeding Bird Surveys.

Annotated List

Species are included in this list only if reported to me by qualified observers, seen by me, documented in published reports or if reported on a Breeding Bird Survey.

Common Loon (Gavia immer) - A fairly common summer resident nesting on many lakes in all counties. Lake development may be a threat to the future of these birds. An estimated 200 pairs nested in the three counties in 1979 (R. Eckstein, pers. comm.).

Red-throated Loon (Gavia stellata) - Rare transient visitor, one report is dated September 29, 1973, on Trout Lake (Vilas County) by Mr. & Mrs. John Brakefield (Pass. Pigeon 36(3):121).

Red-necked Grebe (Podiceps grisegena) - Very rare migrant through this area. I saw one on Black Lake in Oneida County on May 11, 1979.

Horned Grebe (Podiceps auritus) - A regular, uncommon migrant. It seems to be more common during spring migration.

Western Grebe (Aechmophorus occidentalis) - The only known report of Western Grebes in the area was of five birds on Squirrel Lake (Oneida County) in October 1978 by Carl and Dorthy Frister (see Badger Birder No. 174, Oct-Nov. 1978).

Pied-billed Grebe (Podilymbus podiceps) - A fairly common summer resident in marshes and weedy lakes. Rare winter resident on Wisconsin River.
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Table 2: Relative abundance of various birds in Forest, Oneida and Vilas Counties. Calculated from the results of Breeding Bird Surveys conducted from 1966 through 1979. Numbers are the average of stops where the species were heard or seen on a 50-stop transect.
Double-crested cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) - A very rare migrant; one was seen by R.G. Eckstein on Pelican Lake (Oneida County) on October 1, 1979, and one was seen on Lac Vieux Desert (Vilas County) on September 18, 1980, by J. Baughman.

Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) - Fairly common summer resident and migrant. Rookeries are known from each county.

Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) - Uncommon summer resident, found throughout the area usually on streams. Nests have been found in Oneida County.

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) - Very rare migrant. One record at Crandon in Forest County by K. Reusch on May 17, 1977, and another was seen by Wm. Hoppe on Crescent Lake in Oneida County on September 24, 1981.

Great Egret (*Casmerodius albus*) - Very rare migrant. One was seen on the Rainbow Flowage, Oneida County with a large group of Great Blue Herons on August 31, 1979.

Black-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) - There is only one report for this species that I know of. Sam Robbins reported one in Vilas County on June 25, 1965. This area is north of the normal range of this heron and it should be considered rare in this area.

Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*) - Very rare, possible summer resident. One was reported by Sam Robbins in Vilas County, and I saw one on May 30, 1980, on the Wisconsin River Marshes (Oneida County). Breeding status unknown but may nest in Wisconsin River marshes.

American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) - Fairly common summer resident. Found throughout the area along streams and in marshes.

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*) - A rare winter visitor. In recent winters, a small flock has wintered on the Manitowish River at Manitowish Waters (Vilas County).

Whistling Swan (*Olor columbianus*) - Uncommon migrant, regularly found in spring migration on Wisconsin River Marshes (Oneida County).

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*) - Common migrant throughout the area. Fall stopovers regularly in the Starks (Oneida County) vicinity on potato fields. Occasional summer sightings of adults in Forest County and nests at Powell Marsh, Vilas County.

Snow Goose (*Chen caerulescens*) - Uncommon migrant throughout the area.

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) - Fairly common summer resident and migrant. Probably the most common breeding duck.

Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*) - Uncommon resident and migrant. Does breed in the area.

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*) - Uncommon migrant.

Common Pintail (*Anas acuta*) - Uncommon migrant.

Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca*) - Uncommon migrant throughout the area.

Blue-winged Teal (*Anas discors*) - Fairly common migrant, uncommon summer resident.

American Wigeon (*Anas americana*) - Uncommon migrant.

Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*) - Rare to uncommon migrant.
Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) - Fairly common summer resident, probably second most common breeding duck.

Redhead (*Aythya americana*) - Uncommon migrant on larger lakes.

Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*) - Uncommon summer resident in all counties. Fairly common on some lakes.

Canvasback (*Aythya valisineria*) - Uncommon migrant on the larger lakes throughout the area.

Greater scaup (*Aythya marila*) - Greater and Lesser Scaup are fairly common migrants through the area especially on certain large lakes. The relative abundance of these two species in this area is not known.

Lesser Scaup (*Aythya affinis*) - See Greater Scaup.

Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*) - Uncommon migrant with some spending each winter on parts of the Wisconsin River (Oneida County) where the water stays open.

Bufflehead (*Bucephala albeola*) - Uncommon migrant.

White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta deglandi*) - Rare to uncommon migrant. I saw it on the Wisconsin River above Rhinelander in early October 1974, and Bill Reardon (USFS) saw three birds on Butternut Lake (Forest County) on November 23, 1980.

Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) - Uncommon migrant.

Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cackatus*) - Uncommon migrant and summer resident. I have seen hens with broods on streams in Oneida and Forest Counties. Hooded Merganser broods were studied in Forest County by Kitchen and Hunt (1969). J. Baughman has also observed broods in Vilas County.

Common Merganser (*Mergus merganser*) - Uncommon migrant and rare summer resident. Jahn and Hunt (1964) state that Common Merganser broods were found on Mann Lake (Vilas County) during their study.

Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*) - Uncommon migrant and rare summer resident. Appears to me to be less common in this area than Common Mergansers during migration. Jahn and Hunt (1964) found broods on Big Arbor Vitae Lake (Vilas County).

Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) - Uncommon transient visitor usually in summer, but also in spring and fall. There is no indication of regular sightings which would indicate any summer residents or breeders.

Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) - Uncommon permanent resident. Nests have been found in all three counties. These hawks are found during all seasons in low numbers. I assume that migrants also pass through, although no distinct movements have been seen by me.

Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*) - Uncommon summer resident throughout the area. May be more common than my observations indicate due to its forest dwelling habits.

Cooper’s Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) - Uncommon summer resident and migrant.

Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) - Uncommon summer resident. The extensive forests limit the amount of Red-tail habitat in this area.

Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*) - Uncommon summer resident. I believe it nests here in low numbers.
Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*) - Common summer resident found in upland forests. The most common breeding raptor in the area.

**Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*) - Fairly common migrant throughout the area.**

**Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) - Fairly common breeding bird in the lake area. A few spend the winter in the area, especially along the Wisconsin River. Charles R. Sindelar (unpublished reports) provided the following information on number of nests:

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<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vilas County</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>38</td>
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</tr>
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**Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) - Uncommon summer resident, usually found in open bogs and marshes.**

**Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) - Uncommon summer resident, although it can almost be called fairly common in the lake areas of Oneida and Vilas Counties. The Rainbow Flowage is particularly known for its nesting ospreys. Ron Eckstein (DNR) provided the following information on known osprey nests:

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<td>23</td>
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</table>

**Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) - Rare migrant through this area. I have only seen one in the past eight years, on August 14, 1979, on the Rainbow Flowage (Oneida County). The flowage, at that time, was drawn down and hundreds of shorebirds were present.**

**Merlin (*Falco columbarius*) - The Merlin is usually a rare migrant through the area. All the records I know of (3) are spring. An unusual record is that of a nesting pair on the Rainbow Flowage in 1967 and 1968, reported by C. Sindelar (see Passenger Pigeon 31(1):212).**

**American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*) - Fairly common summer resident, rarely present in winter.**

**Spruce Grouse (*Canachites canadensis*) - Uncommon to rare permanent resident. Found in spruce habitat in all three counties, but probably most common in eastern Oneida and Forest Counties.**

**Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*) - Common permanent resident throughout the area.**

**Sharp-tailed Grouse (*Pediocetes phasianellus*) - Uncommon permanent resident in Oneida and Vilas Counties. Has been absent from Forest County for at least ten years. Powell Marsh in Vilas County probably holds the most Sharp-tails in the area. They are also found on Thunder Marsh (Oneida County) and scattered on larger open bogs in Vilas and Oneida Counties.**

**Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis*) - Rare summer resident and uncommon migrant. The only known nesting is on Thunder Marsh near Rice Lake (Oneida County). A single pair was present in 1977, 1978, and 1979. Successful nesting was noted only in 1977.**
Virginia Rail (Rallus limicola) - Probably a rare summer resident, status very poorly known. This rail probably nests on Powell Marsh (Vilas County). J. Baughman saw an immature there on July 4, 1978, and he reported hearing them during the summers of 1978 to 1980.

Sora Rail (Porzana carolina) - Uncommon summer resident. The most soras that I have seen are on wild rice lakes, where they are encountered when picking wild rice.

Yellow Rail (Coturnicops noveboracensis) - Yellow Rails have been reported by several observers, including S. Robbins, throughout the 1970's at Powell Marsh in Vilas County. It is probably a rare breeding bird there.

Common Gallinule (Gallinula chloropus) - There is one record for this species in this area, in Oneida County on August 1, 1979. The observers name was not given (Pass. Pigeon 42(3):109). This is far north of its normal range.

American Coot (Fulica americana) - Fairly common migrant, uncommon summer resident. Coots have been known to nest on the Wisconsin River marshes but not each year.

Semipalmated Plover (Charadrius semipalmatus) - Uncommon migrant, has been seen on the Rainbow Flowage (August 1979) during the flowage drawdown. Also seen on Powell Marsh by J. Baughman in 1979 and 1980.

Killdeer (Charadrius vociferus) - Common summer resident.

Lesser Golden Plover (Pluvialis dominica) - Uncommon migrant.

Black-bellied Plover (Pluvialis squatarola) - Migrant of rare or uncommon status. Seen on Rainbow Flowage (August 1979), Willow Flowage and on Rice Lake (Oneida County) May 28, 1980.

American Woodcock (Philohela minor) - Fairly common summer resident throughout the area. Arrives in the area about April 1 and departs about November 1.

Common Snipe (Capella gallinago) - Fairly common throughout the area where favorable marsh habitat is found.

Upland Sandpiper (Bartramia longicauda) - Uncommon summer resident. Reported on the Crandon BBS. I have searched for these birds during summers in Oneida County and have not been able to locate any, to date.

Spotted Sandpiper (Actitis macularia) - Fairly common summer resident on many lakes throughout the area.

Solitary Sandpiper (Tringa solitaria) - Uncommon migrant.

Willet (Catoptrophorus semipalmatus) - Very rare migrant, one was seen by myself and Jim Baughman on the Rainbow Flowage, Oneida County on August 11, 1979.

Greater Yellowlegs (Tringa melanoleucus) - Fairly common migrant.

Lesser Yellowlegs (Tringa flavipes) - Fairly common migrant.

Pectoral Sandpiper (Calidris melanotos) - Uncommon migrant.

White-rumped Sandpiper (Calidris fuscicollis) - Probably a rare or uncommon migrant. Reported in Vilas County on June 13, 1975, by S. Robbins (Pers. Comm.).

Baird's Sandpiper (Calidris bairdii) - Uncommon migrant.

Least Sandpiper (Calidris minuta) - Uncommon migrant.

Dunlin (Calidris alpina) - Rare migrant. The only record of this species is one in Vilas County by Sam Robbins on June 13, 1975.
Short-billed dowitcher (*Limnodromus griseus*) - Dowitchers are uncommon migrants. Dowitchers (sp.) have been seen on the Rainbow Flowage.

Long-billed dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) - See short-billed dowitcher. Long-billed dowitchers were seen on the Rainbow Flowage on May 13, 1978.

Semipalmated Sandpiper (*Calidris pusilla*) - Probably a rare or uncommon migrant through this area. Reported in Vilas County on June 13, 1975, by S. Robbins (Pers. Comm.).

Buff-breasted sandpiper (*Tryngites subruficollis*) - Rare migrant. One report from Powell Marsh (Vilas County) of four birds during the summer of 1980 by Tryggeseth (Pass. Pigeon 31(2):249.).

Wilson’s Phalarope (*Steganopus tricolor*) - Rare migrant. J. Baughman saw about a dozen birds each on Powell Marsh (Vilas County) on June 1, 1979, and on May 25, 1980.

Northern Phalarope (*Lobipes lobatus*) - Rare migrant, only seen once on the Rainbow Flowage by myself and Jim Baughman on August 11, 1979.

Glaucus Gull (*Larus hyperboreus*) - There is only one known report of this gull for this area. This report for Vilas County dated November 12, 1975, by L. Thomas (Pass. Pigeon 38(3):119) states, “Apparently driven into Vilas County by the same storm that sank the "E. Fitzgerald" in Lake Superior.

Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) - Uncommon migrant, on larger bodies of water.

Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*) - Uncommon migrant.

Bonaparte’s Gull (*Larus philadelphia*) - Very uncommon migrant.

Common Tern (*Sternula hirundo*) - Uncommon migrant.

Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*) - Uncommon summer resident. Nests in all three counties on bog and marshy areas.

Rock Dove (*Columbia livia*) - Uncommon permanent resident found only in larger towns and some farm areas.

Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*) - Uncommon summer resident.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) - Summer resident; status not known very well, probably a rare to uncommon resident. Has been reported on two breeding bird surveys.

Black-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythropthalmus*) - Uncommon summer resident, found scattered throughout the area.

Common Screech Owl (*Otus asio*) - Status unknown, probably rare. One record was a bird found dead in Rhinelander March 14, 1979.

Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) - Uncommon permanent resident, probably third most common breeding owl.

Snowy Owl (*Nyctea scandiaca*) - Irregular winter resident, probably most often found in the vicinity of Rhinelander but can be found in all counties.

Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) - Uncommon permanent resident, probably second most common breeding owl.

Great Gray Owl (*Strix nebulosa*) - Has been found in Forest County and checked out by Don Follen, Sr. (Pass. Pigeon 42(1):25-26). These late summer reports suggest possible nesting in this area.

Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*) - Status unknown. One was road-killed in the vicinity of Pelican Lake, Oneida County.
Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*) - Status unknown. Has been seen in early spring on Thunder Marsh, Oneida County and in Forest County (Pass. Pigeon 42(3):112).

Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*) - Fairly common in the spring and found throughout summer and fall. The secretive nature of this owl makes status determination in any season but spring difficult. Found throughout the area during the spring breeding season.

Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*) - Uncommon summer resident throughout the area.

Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*) - Fairly common summer resident near towns and cities in all counties. Known to nest on a number of roofs in Rhinelander.

Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*) - Uncommon summer resident in all counties.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*) - Uncommon summer resident throughout the area.

Belted Kingfisher (*Megaceryle alcyon*) - Fairly common to uncommon summer resident. Lack of nesting sites may be a limiting factor.

Common Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*) - Common summer resident.

Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*) - Fairly common permanent resident.

Red-bellied Woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinus*) - Uncommon to rare this far north. I have reports from Oneida County and there are at least two published reports from Vilas County (Pass. Pigeon 27(2):85 and 41(2):86).


Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*) - Fairly common summer resident throughout the area.

Hairy Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*) - Fairly common permanent resident.

Downy Woodpecker (*Picoides pubescens*) - Fairly common permanent resident.

Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides arcticus*) - Rare permanent resident in spruce swamps. Seems to be more common in Forest and Oneida Counties but can also be found in Vilas County.

Northern Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides tridactylus*) - Thiel (1978, Pass. Pigeon 40(4):477-488) lists reports of this extremely rare woodpecker for each of the three counties. This woodpecker is apparently much rarer than the "Black-backed".

Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) - Fairly common summer resident in areas of suitable habitat.

Great Crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*) - Fairly common summer resident throughout the area.

Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis flava*) - Fairly common summer resident throughout the area.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*Empidonax flaviventris*) - Uncommon summer resident throughout the area.

Alder Flycatcher (*Empidonax alnorum*) - Fairly common summer resident in some areas throughout the three counties. Common in areas where the habitat is suitable. Willow Flycatchers have not been documented in this area.
Least Flycatcher (Empidonax minimus) - Common summer resident throughout the area. This is the most abundant flycatcher in this area, being found in most deciduous forest stands.

Eastern Pewee (Contopus virens) - Uncommon summer resident throughout the area.

Olive-sided Flycatcher (Nuttallornis borealis) - Uncommon summer resident throughout the area.

Horned Lark (Eremophila alpestris) - Fairly common migratory, uncommon summer resident. Larks occasionally are observed during winters, especially those with light snow cover of fields.

Tree Swallow (Iridoprocne bicolor) - Common summer resident. The most abundant swallow in the area.

Bank Swallow (Riparia riparia) - Uncommon summer resident, scattered throughout the area where suitable nest sites are located.

Rough-winged Swallow (Stelgidopteryx ruficollis) - Uncommon summer resident.

Barn Swallow (Hirundo rustica) - Fairly common summer resident.

Cliff Swallow (Petrochelidon pyrrhonota) - Fairly common summer resident.

Purple Martin (Progne subis) - Fairly common summer resident, usually near human habitations.

Gray Jay (Perisoreus canadensis) - Uncommon permanent resident in spruce swamps throughout the area.

Blue Jay (Cyanocitta cristata) - Common permanent resident throughout the area.

Black-billed Magpie (Pica pica) - This western corvid has to be called accidental in this area. There is one published report for Vilas County on November 23, 1969 (Pass. Pigeon 32(4):171), and Bruce Kohn saw one in Oneida County in December, 1972.

Northern Raven (Corvus corax) - Common permanent resident, known to nest in this area.

American Crow (Corvus brachyrhynchos) - Common summer resident. A few usually spend the winter in the area also.

Black-capped Chickadee (Parus atricapillus) - Common permanent resident.

Boreal Chickadee (Parus hudsonicus) - Uncommon permanent resident in all counties. Found in spruce swamps usually.

White-breasted Nuthatch (Sitta carolinensis) - Uncommon permanent resident.

Red-breasted Nuthatch (Sitta canadensis) - Uncommon permanent resident.

Brown Creeper (Certhia familiaris) - Uncommon summer resident, fairly common migrant and rare winter resident.

Northern House Wren (Troglodytes aedon) - Uncommon summer resident.

Winter Wren (Troglodytes troglodytes) - Uncommon summer resident. Regularly found in cedar and spruce swamps throughout the area.

Marsh Wren (Cistothorus palustris) - Uncommon to rare summer resident.

Sedge Wren (Cistothorus platensis) - Uncommon summer resident, however, is locally common in good habitat such as that at Thunder Marsh.
Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*) - Uncommon summer resident.
Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*) - Uncommon summer resident.
American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*) - Abundant summer resident.
Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) - Very rare winter visitor. One recorded in Oneida County during January 1980 in Harshaw.
Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*) - Uncommon summer resident. This thrush is apparently more abundant in Forest County and less common westward into Oneida and Vilas Counties.
Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*) - Fairly common summer resident.
Swainson’s Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*) - Rare summer resident, more common in migration.
Gray-cheeked Thrush (*Catharus minimus*) - Present only as a migrant.
Veery (*Catharus fuscens*) - Common summer resident.
Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) - Uncommon summer resident in all counties.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila caerulea*) - Rare summer resident. The only known report was by Robert and Sue Spahn in Vilas County, July 6 to 15, 1977 (Pass. Pigeon 40(2):410).
Golden-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus satrapa*) - Rare summer and winter resident and fairly common migrant.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*) - Uncommon summer resident and fairly common migrant. This species has been reported more on the BBS than the Golden-crowned.
Water Pipit (*Anthus spinola*ta) - Uncommon migrant, found on cultivated farm fields and sand flats on the Rainbow Flowage.
Bohemian Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*) Occasional winter visitor. Most frequently seen in towns in mountain ash and crabapple trees.
Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) - Fairly common summer resident.
Northern Shrike (*Lanius excubitor*) - Uncommon migrant, most often seen in early spring or late winter.
European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) - Common permanent resident. Usually in towns or farm areas. I have also seen them nesting in Wood Duck boxes far from “civilization”.
Yellow-throated Vireo (*Vireo flavifrons*) - Uncommon summer resident.
Solitary Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*) - Uncommon summer resident.
Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*) - Abundant summer resident.
Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*) - Migrates through this area in unknown numbers.
Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*) - Uncommon summer resident.
Black and White Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*) - Uncommon summer resident, found throughout the area.
Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) - Uncommon summer resident, which can be locally more common. I have found nests of this species in Forest County.
Blue-winged Warbler (*Vermivora pinus*) - J. Baughman saw one in mid-May 1979 in Vilas County.
Lawrence’s Warbler (hybrid) - One reported in Vilas County on May 14, 1978, by R. Green (Pass. Pieg. 41(1):36.)
Tennessee Warbler (*Vermivora peregrina*) - Common migrant.

Orange-crowned Warbler (*Vermivora celata*) - Migrant, status unknown.

Nashville Warbler (*Vermivora ruficapilla*) - A common warbler of the wooded swamps throughout the area.

Northern Parula Warbler (*Parula americana*) - Uncommon summer resident, found in spruce swamps where Usnea lichen is abundant.

Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*) - Uncommon summer resident. Fairly common in the brushy parts of Thunder Marsh.

Magnolia Warbler (*Dendroica magnolia*) - rare to uncommon summer resident, fairly common migrant.

Cape May Warbler (*Dendroica tigrina*) - Rare summer resident, fairly common migrant.

Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Dendroica caerulescens*) - Uncommon summer resident, found most in northern Forest County and Eastern Vilas County.

Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*) - Fairly common summer resident in most conifer swamps. Abundant migrant.

Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*) - Fairly common summer resident.

Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*) - This warbler may be a rare summer resident. J. Baughman saw one in Vilas County on May 14, 1977.

Blackburnian Warbler (*Dendroica fusca*) - Uncommon summer resident, often found in mature hemlock stands.

Chestnut-sided Warbler (*Dendroica pensylvanica*) - Common summer resident throughout the area.

Bay-breasted Warbler (*Dendroica castanea*) - Uncommon migrant, possibly a rare summer resident. J. Baughman found a singing male in eastern Vilas County during the summers of 1979 and 1980.

Blackpoll Warbler (*Dendroica striata*) - Uncommon migrant.

Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*) - Fairly common summer resident. More common in Oneida and Vilas Counties than in Forest County.

Kirtland's Warbler (*Dendroica kirtlandii*) - There is only one report for this area. On one day in May 1946, Dr. L. Almon saw a male for most of the day near her house south of Rhinelander.

Palm Warbler (*Dendroica palmarum*) - Rare summer resident and very common migrant with Yellow-rumped Warblers. This species is frequently reported at the spruce bog on Highway “A” just south of Three Lakes.

Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*) - Abundant summer resident, found in almost all deciduous forests.

Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*) - Uncommon summer resident, found in wet spruce and cedar swamps. Can be found every year just off Highway 45 one-eighth mile south of Highway “C”.

Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*) - Uncommon summer resident. I have found it most frequently in spruce and tamarack stands; however, it was also found in jack pine stands in Vilas County by J. Baughman.

Mourning Warbler (*Oporornis philadelphicus*) - Fairly common summer resident. Young aspen stands frequently harbor this species.

Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*) - Common summer resident.
Wilson's Warbler (Wilsonia pusilla) - Uncommon migrant.
Canada Warbler (Wilsonia canadensis) - Uncommon summer resident.
American Redstart (Setophaga ruticilla) - This species is not particularly common in this area. As usual, it is found around towns and farms; but because of the extensive forest areas, it is not found throughout the area.
House Sparrow (Passer domesticus) - This species is not particularly common in this area. As usual, it is found around towns and farms; but because of the extensive forest areas, it is not found throughout the area.
Bobolink (Dolichonyx oryzivorus) - Uncommon summer resident. Good Bobolink habitat is scarce over most of this area; southern Forest County probably has the most Bobolinks. They are also frequently found in the fields west of Pelican Lake in Oneida County.
Eastern Meadowlark (Sturnella magna) - Due to lack of extensive open habitats, meadowlarks are not common in this area. Uncommon throughout the area.
Western Meadowlark (Sturnella neglecta) - Even less common than the Eastern Meadowlark.
Yellow-headed Blackbird (Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus) - This species has been found two places in Oneida County, the Wisconsin River marshes and at Rice Lake and on Big Rice Lake in Forest County.
Red-winged Blackbird (Agelaius phoeniceus) - A common summer resident throughout the area.
Northern Oriole (Icterus galbula) - Fairly common summer resident of spotty distribution in the area.
Rusty Blackbird (Euphagus carolinus) - A migrant through the area of unknown status.
Brewer's Blackbird (Euphagus cyanocephalus) - An uncommon summer resident that seems to be more abundant during migration.
Common Grackle (Quiscalus quiscula) - Fairly common summer resident.
Brown-headed Cowbird (Molothrus ater) - Common summer resident.
Scarlet Tanager (Piranga olivacea) - Fairly common summer resident.
Summer Tanager (Piranga rubra) - Accidental summer visitor. Only record is one on the 1976 McNaughton Breeding Bird Survey, Oneida County.
Cardinal (Cardinalis cardinalis) - Uncommon to rare visitor this far north. I have received various reports of cardinals in Oneida County but have never seen one myself.
Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Pheucticus ludovicianus) - Fairly common summer resident.
Black-headed Grosbeak (Pheucticus melanocephalus) - One report of this species is known. In January of 1980, one was a regular visitor at a feeder at Lake Thompson in Oneida County.
Indigo Bunting (Passerina cyanea) - Fairly common summer resident.
Dickcissil (Spiza americana) - This could rarely be a summer resident, having been reported regularly from Langlade County. The only report that I know of was one on the 1973 Eagle River Breeding Bird Survey, Vilas County.
Evening Grosbeak (Hesperiphona vespertina) - These birds are now residents throughout the year in this area. Winter numbers fluctuate quite a bit and the summer status could best be called fairly common.
Purple Finch (Carpodacus purpureus) - Fairly common summer resident and winter visitor of varying status.

Pine Grosbeak (Pinicola enucleator) - Winter resident in varying numbers. Common Redpoll (Carduelis flammea) - Winter visitor usually of uncommon status.

Pine Siskin (Carduelis pinus) - Uncommon summer resident, winter visitor in varying numbers.

American Goldfinch (Carduelis tristis) - Fairly common summer resident which often winters in varying numbers.

Red Crossbill (Loxia curvirostra) - Rare summer resident and uncommon winter visitor.

White-winged Crossbill (Loxia leucoptera) - Uncommon winter visitor but usually more common than Red Crossbills.

Rufus-sided Towhee (Pipilo erythrophthalmus) - Uncommon summer resident throughout the area probably more common in Vilas and Oneida Counties.

Savannah Sparrow (Passerculus sandwichensis) - Uncommon summer resident.

Grasshopper Sparrow (Ammomanes savannarum) - Rare summer resident, reported four years on the McNaughton Breeding Bird Survey between 1975 and 1979.

LeConte’s Sparrow (Ammospiza leconteii) - Rare summer resident and migrant.

Henslow’s Sparrow (Ammomanes henslowii) - Status unknown. Dr. Lois Almon reported this species on her land in Oneida County (No Date).

Vesper Sparrow (Pooecetes gramineus) - Uncommon summer resident, probably less common in Forest County.

Northern Junco (Junco hyemalis) - Uncommon summer resident, common migrant and rare winter visitor.

American Tree Sparrow (Spizella arborea) - Only present in the area as a migrant, not known to winter or summer in this area.

Chipping Sparrow (Spizella passerina) - Common summer resident.

Clay-colored Sparrow (Spizella pallida) - Uncommon summer resident.

Field Sparrow (Spizella pusilla) - Rare to uncommon summer resident.

Harris’ Sparrow (Zonotrichia querula) - Migrant of uncommon occurrence.

White-crowned Sparrow (Zonotrichia leucophrys) - Uncommon migrant.

White-throated Sparrow (Zonotrichia albicollis) - Common summer resident throughout the area.

Fox Sparrow (Passerella iliaca) - Uncommon migrant.

Lincoln’s Sparrow (Melospiza lincolnii) - Uncommon summer resident; however, in the proper bog habitat, it is locally common. For example, on June 10, 1980, I found six singing males around Gobbler Lake (Oneida County) on a Scientific Areas census.

Swamp Sparrow (Melospiza georgiana) - Uncommon summer resident which is locally more common in good habitat as on Thunder Marsh, Oneida County.

Song Sparrow (Melospiza melodia) - Common summer resident throughout the area.
Lapland Longspur (Calcarius lapponicus) - Uncommon migrant.  
Snow Bunting (Plectrophenax nivalis) - Fairly common migrant which often spends the winter in farm areas.

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